



## **New and Small Starts Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking**

**Outreach Sessions  
June and July 2010**



### **Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions
- Ground Rules for Session
- Introduction to New Starts and Context for ANPRM
- ANPRM Subjects and Questions
- How to Submit Comments
- Next Steps



## Why an ANPRM?

- More fully realize the livability and sustainability goals of the Obama Administration
- Give more meaningful consideration to the full range of benefits that transit can provide
  - mobility benefits and other important economic development, environmental, social, and congestion relief benefits
- Encourage participation and comment on potential approaches

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## ANPRM Outreach Session Ground Rules

- Not a public hearing
- FTA is listening and responding to questions
- Comments need to be submitted in writing to the Docket by the closing date of the comment period

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## Program Overview

- **What is a New or Small Start?**
  - New “fixed guideways” and extensions to existing systems
  - Corridor based bus systems
  - Includes light rail, heavy rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit
- **A Discretionary & Competitive Federal Grant Program**
  - \$1.99 billion appropriated in Fiscal Year 2010
  - Demand for funds exceeds supply
  - Historical average federal New Starts share = 50%
  - Largest discretionary Obama Administration Livability program
- **Evaluation** – As directed in law, FTA evaluates and rates projects:
  - Annually in a Report to Congress (due First Monday in February)
  - For entry into Preliminary Engineering
  - For entry into Final Design
  - Prior to Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) and construction
- **Record of Success** – Over 100 major projects over 35 years

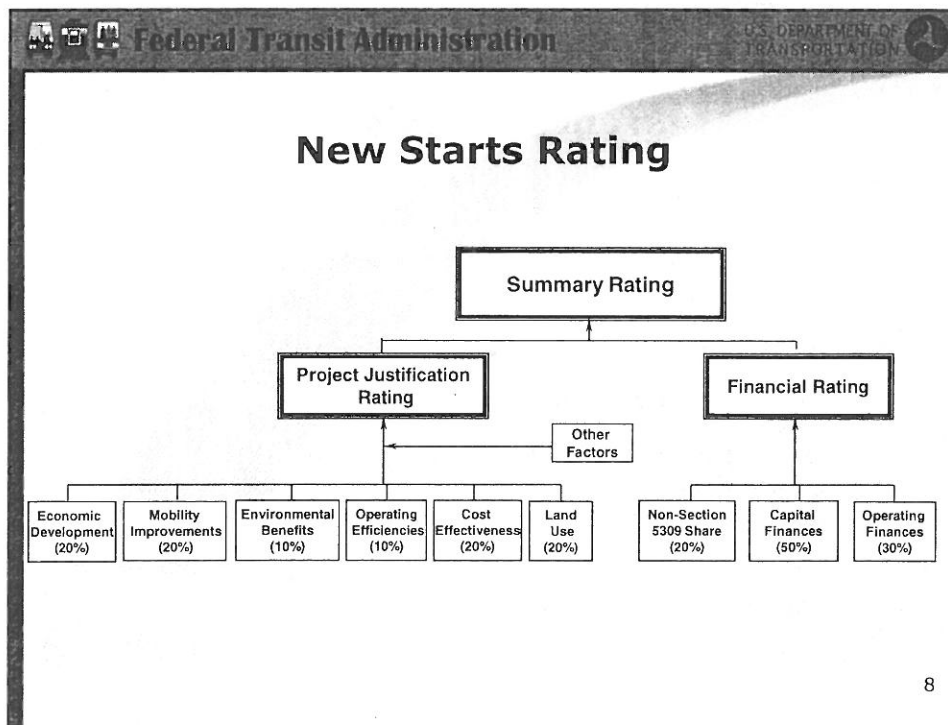
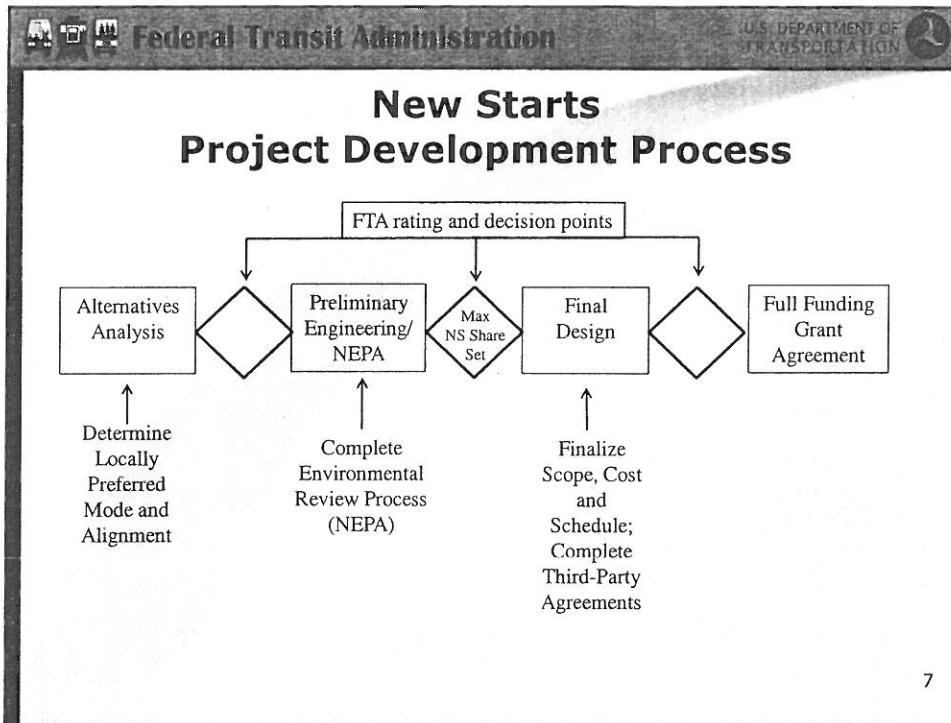
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## Program Goals

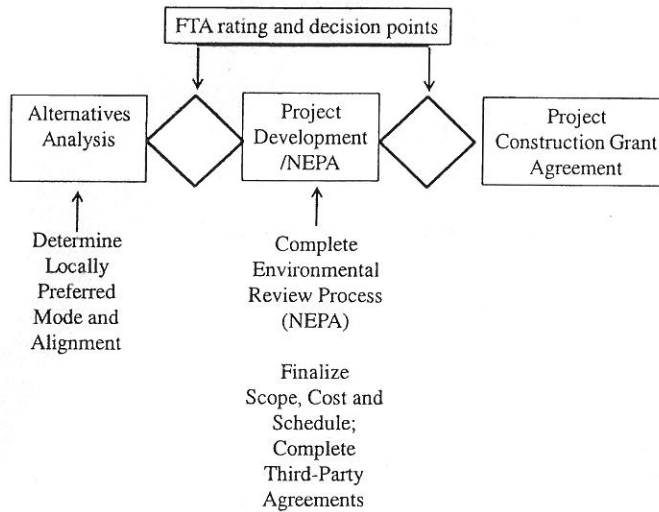
- Fund meritorious projects
  - Develop reliable information on project benefits and costs
  - Ensure projects treated equitably nationally
  - Transparent evaluation process
  - Local decisions, project ratings, and funding recommendations are based on the best information available to both the public and decision-makers
  - Facilitate communication between FTA, transit industry and Congress

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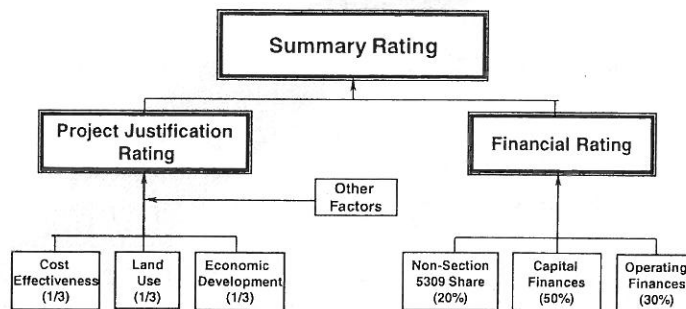
## Small Starts Project Development Process



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## Small Starts Rating



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## Subjects in this ANRPM

- Cost Effectiveness
- Environmental Benefits
- Economic Development

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## Cost Effectiveness

- Current Calculation:
  - annualized capital and operating cost per hour of travel time savings
  - costs and benefits of proposed project compared to "Baseline Alternative" (usually a lower cost bus option)
- Rating thresholds based on value of time
- Non-mobility benefits are not calculated individually, but instead assumed to be directly proportional to mobility benefits
- An allowance is made within the cost-effectiveness thresholds for non-mobility benefits

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## Cost Effectiveness

- How should FTA measure the benefits of transit investments?
- What benefits other than mobility should be calculated?
- How best to quantify the other benefits?
- Are there simpler benefit measures?
- How to address baseline alternative?
- Consider additional benefit categories?
- Use opening year or forecast year?

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## Environmental Benefits

- Current approach:
  - EPA Air Quality Designation for the Metropolitan Area
- Former approach:
  - Reductions in emissions based on change in vehicle miles travelled
- FTA examination of different approaches:
  - October 2008 Colloquium
  - Funding ongoing research project
  - Exec. Order 13514 – Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance

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## Environmental Benefits

- How should FTA measure the environmental benefits of transit investments?
- Should FTA use a broad definition of the environment or focus on specific areas such as air quality or greenhouse gas emissions?
- Should FTA consider project specific impacts or the project's relationship to the broader context?
- Should mitigation of project construction impacts be considered?
- Is vehicle usage reduction a good measure?

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## Environmental Benefits

- Should FTA evaluate factors such as LEED certification, use of low impact implementation measures, or use of "green energy"?
- How should FTA take into account the Executive Order on Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance?
- How could FTA measure and compare technology improvements in assessing projects?
- Should environmental benefits be counted in cost-effectiveness and/or incorporated in funding decisions?

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## Economic Development

- Current FTA approach:
  - Defined as extent to which project enhances transit oriented development (TOD)
  - Evaluate transit supportive land use and development policies
- FTA examination of different approaches:
  - Convened 2007 Expert Panel
  - Published January 2009 discussion paper

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## Economic Development

- How should FTA address project impacts on land use and/or economic development?
- Should FTA continue its current approach?
- Should FTA define economic development differently?
- Should FTA use quantitative or qualitative approaches or both?
- What scale should be used to measure economic development – corridor or region?

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## Economic Development

- How can FTA distinguish between land use and economic development effects?
- How can FTA distinguish between development new to a region caused by the project and development relocated due to the investment?
- Should FTA assess how plans, policies, and incentives are likely to lead to employment increases?
- Are land value increases a good measure of economic development potential?
- Should economic development benefits be part of the cost-effectiveness measure?

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## How to Comment

- [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov)
- Fax 202-493-2251
- By Mail to USDOT HQ
- Hand Deliver to USDOT HQ
- Cite Docket FTA-2010-0009

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## Next Steps

- Review of comments received
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- Review of comments received
- Final Rule

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## Useful Background Information

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## Characteristics of a New Starts Project

- New fixed guideway systems and extensions
- New Starts funding sought is  $> \$75M$  and/or costs  $\geq \$250M$
- Fixed guideway is either:
  - rail OR
  - a separate right-of-way for the use of public transportation or high occupancy vehicles OR
  - a catenary and right-of-way usable by other forms of transportation

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## Characteristics of a Small Starts Project

- Total cost  $< \$250$  million and Small Starts share  $< \$75$  million
- Fixed guideway along at least 50 percent of the project length in the peak period. Fixed guideway is:
  - rail OR
  - a separate right-of-way for the use of public transportation or high occupancy vehicles OR
  - a catenary and right-of-way usable by other forms of transportation OR
- Corridor bus project including at least:
  - Substantial transit stations
  - Traffic signal priority or pre-emption
  - Low floor buses or level boarding
  - Branding of the proposed service
  - 10 min peak/15 min off-peak headways or better while operating at least 14 hours a day

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## Funding Supply and Demand

- Demand:
  - 25 New Starts projects in Preliminary Engineering and Final Design
  - 10 Small Starts projects in Project Development
  - Total cost of pipeline: ~\$35 billion, ~\$15 billion in New/Small Starts funding
  - FTA tracking >100 corridor focused planning studies considering major transit capital investments
- Supply: approximately \$1.8+ billion annually

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## New and Small Starts Program Information

- For more information about the current program, see FTA's webpage at:  
[http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/planning\\_environment\\_5221.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/planning_environment_5221.html)

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